

# Joint Forces Search and Rescue teams practice space capsule recovery in Russia

By Staff Sgt. Kathryn Baines  
Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Craig Campbell, Commander of the Alaska National Guard, Brig. Gen. Gene Ramsay, 176th Wing Commander, and members of the 210th Rescue Squadron took part in the annual Arctic Search and Rescue Exercise hosted September 10 through 12 by the Russian Federation at the coastal town of Gelendzhik, Russia.

Arctic SAREX 03 is the tenth in a series of Canadian, American and Russian military exercises to fine tune joint Search and Rescue capabilities.

“Arctic SAREX is the longest standing military-to-military program between the United States and Russia,” said Chief Master Sgt. Garth Lenz, 210th RQS pararescue superintendent.

“It provides a great opportunity for diplomacy,” he said.

Not only diplomacy, it also provides a venue to compare Search and Rescue notes and equipment after nearly 40 years of isolation between the two countries.

Unveiled at this year’s SAREX was the new Russian amphibian plane, the Be-200. The highly maneuverable, fast cruiser was a real head-turner according to Lenz.

In a departure from recent themes, this year’s exercise involved the search and rescue of an international space station crew, which made a Black Sea splashdown in a Russian Soyuz space capsule. Since the



Two members of the Russian SAREX team float on a raft the Soyuz Russian Space Capsule rests on in the Black Sea after a simulated “splash-down” during last month’s exercise.

capsule’s trajectory can change at any moment, the rescuers must be ready for both dry and wet touchdowns.

This scenario affects all participating countries, since re-entry emergency descents could land anywhere between the arctic and the antarctic.

On the flip side and more to the point, launched Russian spacecraft travel directly over Alaska and Canada.

American participation also has greater relevancy due to the recent grounding of the shuttle fleet. Pend-

ing the outcome of NASA’s investigation of the *Columbia* tragedy, the Soyuz space capsule will continue to be used by astronauts for crew rotation from the ISS.

The next landing is scheduled for Oct. 27, 9:36 p.m. EST. It will be the second time American astronauts return to Earth in a Russian capsule.

Next year, the exercise will be held in Alaska, which will provide an opportunity for greater Alaskan Guardsmen participation.

. . . . .

*Special Issue*  
*Twice the number of pages*

- ☐ Combined Oct./Nov. issue
- ☐ Includes two feature stories on 210th deployment
- ☐ Two pages of full-color, pages 6 and 7

# Flu season is back...and the shot does help prevent it!

Influenza is a contagious disease that is caused by the influenza virus. It attacks the respiratory tract in humans and is different from a cold. Influenza usually comes on suddenly and may include these symptoms:

- Fever
- Headache
- Tiredness (can be extreme)
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion
- Body aches

Most people who get influenza will recover in one to two weeks, but some people will develop life-threatening complications as a result of the flu.

Millions of people in the United States—about ten to twenty percent of U.S. residents—will get influenza each year. An average of about 36,000 people per year in the United States die from influenza, and 114,000 per year have to be admitted to the hospital as a result of influenza. Anyone can get the flu (even healthy people), and serious problems from influenza can happen at any age.

## The Flu Is Contagious

A person can spread the flu starting one day before he or she feels sick. Adults can continue to pass the flu virus to others for another three to

seven days after symptoms start. Children can pass the virus for longer than seven days. Symptoms start one to four days after the virus enters the body. Some persons can be infected with the flu virus but have no symptoms. During this time, those persons can still spread the virus to others.

Influenza is caused by a virus, so antibiotics (like penicillin) don't work to cure it. The best way to prevent the flu is to get an influenza vaccine (**flu shot**) each fall, before flu season.



Master Sgt. Stacy Catania gives Wing Commander Brig. Gen. Gene Ramsay the first flu shot on Kulis last month.

Fuel Your Future

## Who do you know?

**The 176th Wing needs your help filling our 150 unit vacancies!**

- We have a 90% success rate enlisting referrals from Guard members!
- Without your referrals, our recruiters process 30 packages for one successful enlistment.

**Who do you know that will enjoy the education, benefits, and pride of serving our state and nation?**

**Recruiters: 249-1282  
or 800-642-6228**

## Do you have news to share?

We welcome articles and captioned photos relevant to members of the 176th Wing.

Submissions must be accurate in fact, and will be edited for clarity and length. Articles will be published as space permits. Submissions are due on Sunday of the UTA prior to the month the article will be published.

Submit articles as Microsoft Word attachments via e-mail. Photographs must be 300 dpi TIF or JPG images, also submitted as attachments via e-mail. Please send to both:  
candis.olmstead@akanch.ang.af.mil and  
john.callahan@akanch.ang.af.mil.

We may be contacted at (907) 249-1342. The office is manned with Traditional Guardsmen, so please leave a message.

The **AIR GUARDIAN** is the official newsletter of the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard. It is published monthly by members of the wing's public affairs office. Views expressed may not be those of the U.S. Air Force, Air National Guard, Department of Defense or U.S. Government.

**WING COMMANDER**  
Brig. Gen. Gene Ramsay

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF**  
Capt. Candis Olmstead  
Staff Sgt. Kathryn Baines  
Senior Airman John Callahan  
Senior Airman Kimberly Glasco

**MULTIMEDIA STAFF**  
Senior Master Sgt. Paul Charron  
Master Sgt. Michael Blume  
Tech. Sgt. Nanette Martinez  
Staff Sgt. Shannon Oleson  
Staff Sgt. Alan Swircenski  
Staff Sgt. Asia Gile  
Senior Airman Kitty Greene



# Deployed 210th recounts lessons-learned

By Lt. Col. Charles Foster  
210th Rescue Squadron Commander  
Deployed Commander

With the passing of September, the 210th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron HH-60 team at Kandahar celebrated the passing of the first three months of deployment to the notorious airfield at the edge of Afghanistan's Margow Desert. With the notable exception of a few individuals, the team has experienced a complete turnover of personnel, so it's a good time to reflect on how the mission is progressing and reinforce some of the lessons learned in the early months.

Happily, the hard work and expertise of the operators and support personnel have resulted in a perfect response record. At every turn, when the mission called for the 210th, they responded and executed. It's awfully hard to do better than 100 percent reliability. But that kind of excellence comes at a cost: maintainers frequently spent long, uncomfortable hours diagnosing and repairing systems that seemed intent on staying broken. Flight crews maintained a 24/7 alert watch and sprang into action several times only to be told moments before launch that the mission would not require their efforts after all. To some, it may have seemed like wasted effort. The one hundred-percent readiness showed a different story: no effort is wasted when lives are at stake.

In Afghanistan, lives are frequently at risk. Some days, a U.S. soldier may be injured or sick, other times it might be a child who wandered into a long-forgotten minefield. Often, the life at risk is that of a coalition soldier wounded in battle. In all these cases—16 lives saved and two assisted—the small team at Kandahar made the critical difference between adequate medical care or prolonged suffering, and perhaps death.

The coalition effort in Afghanistan is sure to be a long one. The values attached to freedom and liberty are inevitably accompanied by a respect for law and life. The history of Afghan culture doesn't teach a respect for life as we in the west would understand it. One of the benefits of the 210th in the country is to demonstrate, one child at a time, that we will put forth a significant effort to protect and preserve life because, as we understand it, it is the most basic human right. One life at a time, we can influence a slow turning of Afghan culture to one that resists totalitarianism and embraces human dignity.

But not all lessons learned are so far-reaching. For instance, when I first arrived in country, I applied my previous experi-



From left; Pararescuemen Staff Sgts. Jonathan Davis and David Shuman, and Flight Engineer Master Sgt. Robert Carte prepare for a mission launch. The helo pictured had just arrived to the deployed location from the 176th Wing in Anchorage.

ence to life as a deployed airman in the desert: Sleep during the day. This allowed me to avoid the scorching heat and moved my circadian rhythm to the night hours when flying would be inherently more hazardous. Nice idea, but I soon recognized that Operation Enduring Freedom was not like Southern Watch. In "the 'Stan'," the war didn't respect my sleep cycle, and I found myself on long missions during daylight struggling to stay sharp. I formed a new approach: Sleep when you can, for as long as you can.

Luckily, the living conditions at Camp Kandahar permitted that. Though billeted in tents, the team atmosphere among the rescuers respected the needs of other members; folks were quiet and kept the lights almost all of the time. This is the second lesson learned: courtesy and kindness are force multipliers. I learned as a teenager that the first requirement for a good job was working with good people. The team at Kandahar met that challenge every hour. There were several deep disagreements, and some conflicts required mediation by other team members, but the relations between members never broke down to a dysfunctional level. Each time a conflict occurred, at the root of the disagreement was this base desire: to meet the challenges of the mission.

Which brings me to the third (though certainly not last) lesson learned. Every member of the rescue team kept the mission first. I saw a great deal of selflessness during my 100 days in country. I watched PJs work under lamps to finish building storage bins. Our supply sergeant dug through a pile of Army helicopter parts to find the one part the Army said wasn't in there—the one we needed to fix the helo. Every day since we arrived, our medic hauled hot meals from the chow hall to our tent row so the guys who were flying or working the flightline could have a better meal than an MRE. The examples are not hard to come by.

I must say I've never been more proud of the Kulis team. The entire Kulis team—including the folks back in Alaska—has served their state and country well. There is still time to go on this deployment. The 210th at Kandahar will carry on with the same resourcefulness and energy that brought us the first 16 saves, ever true to the rescue motto: "These Things We Do... That Others May Live."

# Outstanding members of 176th Wing earn National

## Earl T. Ricks Memorial Trophy

By Capt Candis Olmstead  
Public Affairs

Maj. Richard Watson and his crew from a June 2002 rescue at Mt. Augusta, received honors from the Air Force Association as recipients of this year's Earl T. Ricks Memorial Trophy.

### The Crew

Maj Richard Watson  
Capt David Breun  
Master Sgt. Thomas Dietrich  
Master Sgt. David Shuman  
Senior Airman Christopher Robertson

### The Trophy

This award was named for Maj. Gen. Earl T. Ricks, former Chief of the Air Force Division, National Guard Bureau. This award is presented for **outstanding airmanship** demonstrated by ANG aircrew members. This award can be for the period of service or a single event that occurred within the nomination period.

Master Sgt. Dietrich represented the crew when he received the trophy Sept. 15 at the annual AFA Convention in Washington D.C.

### The Rescue

On the morning of June 19, 2002, an HH-60, HC-130, and the aircrews continued a search and rescue mission that began the evening previous and delayed for daylight and hopefully improved weather conditions. The SAR involved one survivor of a failed climb attempt on Mt. Augusta.

Through extreme weather conditions, excessively high elevation and a 70% mountain slope, the crew was able to carryout this 'High Risk' mission only by dumping fuel, hoisting a pararescueman to the survivor, and operating within only 2 percent of the power available on the aircraft.

Due to the extreme slope that



Mt. Augusta is the tallest peak across the ice field. The rescue that earned Maj. Richard Watson and his crew the Earl T. Ricks Trophy took place in the middle of the visible mountain mass on the rock face.

caused insufficient clearance between the rotor-blades and the rock wall, the PJ had to be lowered to 50 feet below the survivor and climb up to him.

As the HH-60 approached the site, the PJ on the hoist began to spin and oscillate; the flight engineer called for an immediate go-around. After stabilizing the PJ, the crew brought him back around and he timed the swing of the hoist cable to attach himself to the icy wall with his ice axe.

While the PJ climbed up to the survivor and the pilot deftly held a stable hover over a precise spot with minimal visual references, the flight engineer expertly belayed him with the hoist cable while looking beneath and across the belly of the helicopter to keep the PJ in sight.

Time and fuel became critical. The HC-130 circled overhead, standing by to refuel at the HH-60's ready.

With the "low fuel" lights flashing, and the PJ and survivor barely into the helo, the crew air refueled, and headed to Yakutat to load the survivor onto the HC-130 for transport to Anchorage.

Details for "The Rescue" were taken from the award nomination form prepared by 210th Rescue Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Chuck Foster.

## George H.W. Bush Award

By Master Sgt. Antony Mahoy  
Communications and Navigation Supervisor  
Maintenance Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Kevin Combs, Communications and Navigation Systems Craftsman with the 176th Maintenance Squadron, was the enlisted recipient of this year's George W. Bush Award.

Presented in September by the Air Force Association at the National Convention and Aerospace Technology Exposition in Washington D.C., the award recognizes an officer and an enlisted member of the Air National Guard who served in the Aerospace

# National Air Force Association awards for 2003

Expeditionary Force and made significant contributions to the Air National Guard.

"AFA awards highlight the excellent aerospace contributions made by many talented and dedicated Air Force people and AFA members working in support of national defense," John J. Politi, AFA Chairman of the Board said.

"Airmen and civilians, Guardsmen and Reservists, give their best day-in and day-out for the good of our Air

Force and the Nation. We salute AFA's 2003 National Award recipients serving on the home front and abroad, often in harms way."

Combs was activated in support of Operation Noble Eagle in February and recently returned from a several month deployment to Afghanistan where he maintained avionics equipment on HH-60 helicopters.

The award is given jointly to members' civilian employers to acknowledge outstanding support of the Air

Guard. Combs is the Senior Regulatory Compliance Specialist for FEDEX in Anchorage. FEDEX fully supports all activations, provides outstanding benefits during deployments, and recognizes and rewards the training and positive contributions that military service provides.

Combs has been a member of the Alaska Air National Guard at Kulis since March 1990.

## Wing member helps save a life

By Staff Sgt. Kathryn Baines  
Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Cliff Snapp's moose hunt last August quickly turned into an eight-hour rescue of a stranded caribou hunter. Snapp, 611th Air Control Squadron, Superintendent of Weapons and Tactics, began his hunt near the remote town of Chicken, Alaska, 400 miles northeast of Anchorage.

With Snapp was his hunting buddy, Master Sgt. Cedric Leviner, a member of Elmendorf's 19th Fighter Squadron.

After arriving in Chicken, the pair mounted their four-wheelers and headed west off the Taylor Highway to establish camp for the night.

Nearly 17 miles into their backcountry journey, they came across a man lying in the middle of the track, awash in the glow of their ATV headlights. He was both delirious and weak, and dressed inappropriately for the cold and sleeting weather conditions. Snapp and Leviner helped the disorientated, middle-aged hunter to his feet, trying to shelter him from the harsh elements.

Fearing the man was either hypothermic or suffering from a concus-

sion, they quickly loaded him into the back of Snapp's four-wheeler, and headed for the closest medical facility. The trip out of the bush was slow and difficult, as the ailing hunter did not have the strength to hold on to his rescuer, who maneuvered the vehicle over miles of steep, rutted hills.

After finally reaching the truck, it was decided that the town of Tok, 80 miles away, was the closest bet for medical treatment.

Snapp and Leviner contacted State

Troopers in Tok, who arranged for medical personnel to treat the man at nearby first-aid station. His condition warranted medical evacuation to a hospital in Anchorage. The rescuers learned the next day that the evacuated hunter had overdosed on medication and probably would have died if not for their intervention.

Despite the fact that neither man bagged a moose, the hunt ended successfully.



Senior Master Sgt. Paul Charron

The first aircraft is parked in Kulis' newest hangar.



# Alaskans Adapt to Life at Kandahar

By Lt. Col. Charles Foster  
210th Rescue Squadron Commander  
Deployed Commander

Camp life is different than living at home. No surprise there, but just how different *is* life at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan? Well, let's take a look.

There's the heat that first struck me—or maybe it was the dust. Both seemed to be abundant, persistent, and mighty annoying. Though with the coming of winter, the heat has moderated, and the dust reigns supreme as the chief environmental irritant. Imagine the kind of fine dust that accumulates on boxes stored in an attic for a few years. For the Kandahar experience, climb up there and smack those boxes with a rolled up towel. Breathe deeply. Repeat for 90 days.

There's also no denying that Kandahar is an Army base run by Army rules. Leave the blue jeans packed away—you won't need them until you board the rotator for home. Here at K1, you wear DCUs (desert camo)/flight suit or the Air Force equivalent of the Army's PT uniform; t-shirt tucked into shorts, or sweatshirt and sweat pants. Don't forget the firearm to complete the ensemble. No one ventures outside the Air Force compound unless they're packin' the 'Big Iron!'

What would camp life be without a tent to sleep in? Here, we stack nine or ten to a tent and call it good because



Staff Sgt. William "turk" Yonkins, an HH-60 aerial gunner from the 210th Rescue Squadron, sits in the helo gunner's position. Yonkins is one of more than 170 personnel from the 176th Wing deployed to Khandahar in Support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Master Sgt. Steven Kausal, an HH-60 flight engineer in Kandahar leads a debrief after launch cancellation. With Standing behind Kausal is SrA Kevin Bratcher, medical service specialist To his left is SSGT Terry Lammer aerial gunner and to his right is SSgt William Yonkins aerial gunner.

no one has to sleep in the top bunk. (Well, not anymore. There was a time...) The top bunk is a good place to store the massive amounts of gear the Air Force required you to bring, but you hope you'll never use. Of course all your stuff is wrapped in plastic garbage bags because of that dust issue.

Luckily the tents all have electricity, which is good if you want to recharge your batteries, but leave the radios, TVs, CD players and light bulbs off. There are people sleeping here 24

hours a day. You learn to sleep through the constant C-17 and C-130 flights coming and going. After awhile, you learn how many CH-47s are departing just based on how long the noise lasts. Earplugs are a good idea.

Eventually though, everyone must rise and shine at K1. So you roll out of the bunk and glance at your watch to see what time it is in London. For reasons that no one in America understands, the Afghan government chose to set their standard time at four *and a half* hours from Zulu time. Grrrr...right away, trying to convert local time to Alaska time—or even Uzbekistan or Qatar time becomes maddeningly frustrating. So Camp Kandahar runs on Zulu time—same as London. It's a little odd having supper at 1100, but for Alaskans, watching the sun set at 1300 isn't that much of a stretch.

So off to the chow hall you go, t-shirt tucked in and M-16 slung on your back. Along the way, you note how clear the sky seems—the “Feel Good mountains” about four miles away are visible for a change. The clearer skies and temperatures make for a nice walk. Good thing your buddy brought the hand-held radio; there are so few people deployed here from Kulis that you are probably the only one qualified in your job. If they need you, they need *you*.

The chow hall isn't packed for a change, which is nice. Things are so much nicer after the Brown & Root guys took over operating the “DFAC” from the Army. But you still wash up at the small hygiene stands outside. The cautions from the first sergeant—“disease has decimated more armies than any human enemy could ever hope!”—may seem exaggerated, but it only takes once to catch any of the bugs running around Afghanistan, and that's something no one wants.

The food is pretty good, and they have ice cream and cake to knock you off your try at the Atkins diet. So today they serve up chicken cordon bleu, green beans and mashed potatoes. After about ten days, you know all the menus by heart.

After chow it's time to ramp up for tonight's flight schedule. The aircrew takes over the Maintenance Ops tent

for their flight brief and the crew chiefs and specialists move to the flight line to ready the aircraft. Because the helos are working fine and the weather is fairly good, it looks like a nice night to fly. Briefly, you think ahead to the time after the helos are launched. That would be a good time to make a call home to the family in Alaska because there might not be so much competition for “the” morale phone. Or maybe you'll just opt for an email instead. But at least the timing will work out so someone might be awake at home.

And then everything changes. Across the network comes the code for a potential emergency launch and the easy day goes right out the window. With practiced haste, aircraft are prepped and the crew arrives. The mission? This time it's an Afghan child with a severe head injury. They say it was in a fall, but you never know. In short minutes, the Joint Search and Rescue Center decides to launch your helos, and just moments later—after a flurry that seems frantic to the untrained eye—the crews are gone and the ramp falls quiet. You say a prayer for the crews and the child, and wait for their return.

While you wait, the chat settles in on the fact that this mission will be a long one. Perhaps it would be good to catch a nap. But first, you stop in at ops to see how things are progressing. The air refueling is complete and the helos are pressing with the pickup. With luck the child will be at the hospital in a few hours and the helos back before sun-

rise. Yep: naptime.

You rise for the second time today to meet the arriving helicopters. The mission was long, but the child was delivered to the hospital in stable condition. There's every reason to believe he'll survive. Another “save” goes on the boards for the 210th Rescue team, and you note in passing that there's one more family who can know that the United States' military is in Afghanistan to help, not to rule. Maybe this save will help make a difference in the war? And then you get to work readying the helos for the next launch. With no setbacks, you could be done in time for breakfast. Hmmm...suppose they'll have scrambled eggs?



From right: Master Sgt. Scott Ravenscroft, a crew chief assigned to the 210th RQS Det 1 at Eielson, and Tech. Sgt. Mark Karstedder, an aircraft electrician with the 176th Maintenance Squadron, fold the rotators on an HH-60 for re-deployment to the states.



## Promotions

### Captain

Christopher Price 144 AS

### First Lieutenant

Glenn Muilenburg 176 MXS

### Master Sergeant

David Shuman 210 RQS

### Staff Sergeant

Andrew Beuch 176 AMX

Leovan Claunan 176 AMX

Paul Guzman 176 MSF

David Reed 206 CBCS

Christopher Robertson 210 RQS

### Senior Airman

Steven Baldwin 176 MOF

Neil Rutherford 206 CBCS

### Distinguished Graduates cont'd

A1C Patrick A. Wakefield 176 SFS

### BMT Honor Graduate

A1C Steven J. Baldwin 176 MXS

A1C Luke B. Davis 176 APF

### Academic Achievement

SrA William R. Hinman 176 SFS

A1C Luke B. Davis 176 APF

A1C Eric W. McQueary 176 APF

### Duckworth Memorial Award

SrA Benjamin C. Russell 176 APF

### Outstanding CDC Scores

#### 90% and above

TSgt James A. Assenmacher 176 CF

TSgt Mark A. Larroque 176 MXS

SSgt Bobbi J. Baker 176 ACS

SSgt Kirk D. Hopingardner 176 SFS

SSgt William M. Patton III 206 CBCS

SrA Jody E. Young 176 MDS

### Aerial Achievement Cont'd

Capt. Richard D. Watson 210 RQS

SrA Jonathan R. Davis 210 RQS

SrA Robert M. Schnell 210 RQS

### Meritorious Service

Lt. Col. Terese D. LeFrancois MDS

Maj Amy J. Carle 144 AS

Maj Darren E. Slaten 176 WG

Maj Karen E. Stevens 144 AS

Capt Cathy A. Oly 176 MDS

SMSgt James Ebelacker 176 MDS

SMSgt Robert G. McNeil 210 RQS

SMSgt Daniel S. Siekawitc 176 MDS

MSgt Christopher J. Lehew LRS

MSgt Marcia A. Pratt 176 MXS

### Air Force Commendation

Lt Col Donald G. Chiles 176 MDS

Lt Col Colleen B. Hough 176 MDS

Maj Pamela E. Krinsky 176 MDS

SMSgt Daniel S. Siekawitc 176 MDS

TSgt Geraldine C. Kile 176 MDS

TSgt Andre L. Morgan 176 MDS

SSgt Leora L. Fulwider 176 SVF

SSgt Tracy L. Glaze 176 MDS

SSgt Kim T Henderson 176 MDS

### Air Force Achievement

SrA Brandy M. Boatwright 176 OSF

## Top Graduates

### Levitow Award

SSgt Kirk D. Hopingardner 176 SFS

### Distinguished Graduate

SSgt Jeremy D. Groat 210 RQS

SSgt Kyle S. Rice 206 CBCS

SrA Gerald G. Walker 176 ACS

## Awards and Decorations

### Aerial Achievement

Maj. Pamela S. Scott 210 RQS

Capt. Erika L. Sorum 210 RQS

## Congrats to the newest Senior NCOs

Chief Master Sgt. Tim Tillman  
Medical Squadron

What an honor it was to take part in the Senior NCO Induction Ceremony and see several of Kulis' recently promoted master sergeants cross under the saber arch and receive certificates and accolades from the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. Then to be on stage and working with Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Gerald Murray topped it off. It was a wonderful evening punctuated by an extremely moving and well executed POW/MIA remembrance, as well as the keynote speech from CMSAF Murray.

The Air Force Band of the Pacific provided outstanding music throughout the evening. Our very own Chief

Master Sgt. Dennis Hogan was part of the flag team, which posted the colors, and Master Sgt. Paul Verrier acted as one of the two Masters of Ceremony. Brig. Gen. Remkes, Commander of Elmendorf's 3rd Wing, provided the closing remarks, charging the new Senior NCOs with their increased duties and responsibilities.

In all, it was a great evening honoring those who have worked hard and made the sacrifices necessary to attain their new rank.

Our thanks goes to members of Elmendorf's SNCO Induction Committees that have invited the Air National Guard to be a part of this event, including the orientation seminars, over the last few years. This is a true reflection of the "Mirror Force" mentality.

### FIRST SERGEANT VACANCY AFSC 8F000

176<sup>th</sup> Logistics Readiness  
Squadron

Close: 19 October 2003

Those who meet the minimum qualifications will be called for a formal interview. The board will begin interviewing on or about **4 November 2003**. For further information or assistance contact Major Marie Wauters, 249-1403.



# Kickin' it on the Klondike

By Chief Master Sgt. Brian Shaffer  
Chief, Management and Systems Flight  
176th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Nine members of the 176th Wing participated in the Klondike Trail of 98' International Road Relay last month and earned an impressive third place in the Corporate category, 45 seconds out of second and ten minutes out of first place. The team's total time was 14 hrs 55 minutes and they were 21st out of 123 teams total.

The Klondike Relay, ran from Skagway, Alaska to Whitehorse, Yukon, is a total distance of 110 miles with 10 person teams running predetermined distances anywhere from a steep 5.5 mile climb up the pass to a 16 mile rolling hill leg of the race.

The race begins at around 7pm on Friday evening and ends around early afternoon on Saturday. Up to 150 teams compete in this annual event and teams have staggered start times based on predicted finish times.

In other words, 15 to 20 teams start at 7pm and then 30 minutes later 15 to 20 more teams start, and so on, every 30 minutes until the fastest teams start usually around 11pm at night. The runners that run at night have only their pace vehicle to light the way for them. In our case, a 32' motorhome.

We leave our runner with about a mile and a half left and get the next runner up to the exchange zone to get the tag off from the incoming runner. We then get our exhausted runner into the motorhome and get behind the runner who just left so to give them some light to see their way. Of course with 150 teams there are usually a few teams and motorhomes on the road in front or behind us to give additional lighting at times.

This year was the 21th running of the race, and we all really enjoyed the challenge, camaraderie, and legendary northern scenery and hospitality.

## Team Members and the stage they ran

- 1 Senior Airman Audrey Smith
- 2 Capt. Ed Soto
- 3 Chief MasterSgt. Brian Shaffer
- 4 Chief Master Sgt. Brian Shaffer
- 5 Master Sgt. Doug Kaaihue
- 6 Master Sgt. Jon Gibson
- 7 Staff Sgt. Kevin Slayden
- 8 1st Lt. Connie Tobin
- 9 Master Sgt. Vicky Hahn
- 10 Maj. Scott Lubin

## EXERCISE

### Take Note

An Operational Readiness exercise, Phase I, is scheduled Oct. 16 through 19 this month. Members should be prepared to arrive in their duty sections ready to play early Saturday. This may also include a recall Friday night.

Formerly known as Initial Readiness Response Exercise (IRRE), the newly named ORE Phase I, includes on-base preparation for deployment, which includes all activities from notification, recall, mobilization and deployment. Basically, it's getting our people, equipment, and

## EXERCISE



## EXERCISE

Wing members (from left) Tech. Sgt. Jim Wiles from the fire department, and Master Sgts. Steven Duwa and Stephen Gogain from security forces stand-by controlling Entry Control Point Access during the last base exercise.

Operational Readiness refers to the state in which our armed forces are able to transform from a well-prepared peacetime force to an effective fighting force during wartime. The ORE provides a simulated wartime exercise for mobility and combat training in two scenarios.

This year's readiness training kicks off with a series of exercises; October and January, with the inspection in June.

aircraft ready to deploy. Simply put, it's getting them safely and quickly out the door.

## Air Force launches “E Pluribus Unum”

Washington—The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Mr. Michael L. Dominguez, will hold a press conference announcing “E Pluribus Unum,” the language diversity extension of the Your Guardians of Freedom Air Force Parent Pin program. The press conference will be held in the National Press Club’s First Amendment Lounge at 2 p.m., Friday, September 12.

“E Pluribus Unum,” or “Out of Many, One,” is named for the motto on the Great Seal of the United States and evokes both the strength that America derives from the diversity of its citizens and that America’s Air Force derives from the diversity of its airmen.

This initiative allows parents, whose primary language is not English, to receive letters from Air Force leadership thanking them for supporting the military careers of their son or daughter in their native tongue through the Parent Pin program. Letters for “E Pluribus Unum” participants are available in 100 languages, including Spanish, French, Russian, German, Italian, Dutch, Greek, Igbo and Romanian.

Approximately 225,000 parents and parental figures have or will receive the letters and “P” pins from Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper and Secretary of the Air Force James G. Roche.

Approximately 51,235 members of the total Air Force (active duty, Reserve and guard) speak a language other than English. Of those, 25,498 have tested at a level considered proficient by the Air Force, with the majority of airmen exhibiting fluency in Spanish, German, French, Russian and Tagalog.

Media interested in covering this event should contact TSgt. Stephen Prasser, (703) 697-0988, no later than 5 p.m. Thursday, September 11. Media representatives who would like to attend must arrive no later than 1:30 p.m. and provide their media credentials as a form of identification.

*Article provided by Secretary of the Air Force, Directorate of Public Affairs.*

## Get ready to stop checking your mailbox for a Leave and Earnings Statement

**Effective 1 Oct 03**, all Air Force military members will be required to obtain a myPay PIN to access their military pay information on the internet.

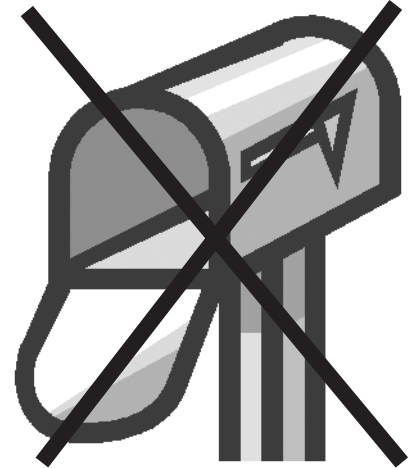
**Effective 1 Jan 04**, hardcopy LES’ will be discontinued for all military members. This has been coordinated with NGB. You can print your LES’ through myPay, as well as perform many other tasks involving pay issues.

Military members can now obtain a myPay PIN in one of the following ways:

✉ Email Debra Hall at [debra.hall@akanch.ang.af.mil](mailto:debra.hall@akanch.ang.af.mil). Your email must include your name and full social security number. You will be issued a temporary PIN.

✉ Present your ID Card at the Kulis finance office and a temporary pin will be issued to you.

✉ You can establish a PIN at the myPay website, <http://mypay.dfas.mil>.



Your pin will be mailed to your home address listed in the military pay system.

Once you have your myPay PIN, your W-2 will also be available via myPay. Please visit <http://mypay.dfas.mil/W2Information.htm> for more information.

## Is your spouse deployed...or have they already returned?

**By Chaplain Maj. Richard Cavens**  
*Chaplains Office*

This missive is for the loved one on the home front.

Let me imagine the scene. That person you married is gone! They’re someplace in the world which makes you worry when you have a lull in the day’s activities. The “To Do” list keeps growing and growing. You had to take a day off from work because the kid traded cold germs with a schoolmate. And now, just now, the dog piddled on the floor in front of you. If you had the time you would go crazy.

Let me look farther down the road. That person you married just returned from deployment in some God-forsaken place. Everybody has hugged, said they missed one another, and expressed words of love.

But that special person you missed now seems distant and withdrawn. Both of you seem tired beyond what you imagined and the kids will not stop whining.

Maybe the chaplain can help bring order in this time of change. Maybe the chaplain can help sort out why something seems missing.

Well, the friendly neighborhood chaplain cannot fix it all, but they can lend an ear, relieve some anxiety and help you find some hope. There is a chaplain at Kulis, full time, to help families who are going through a tough time, or with the adjustment of reunion.

Chaplain Rick Cavens can be contacted at Kulis by dialing 249-1555. He can also be reached at his home number, 349-5268, or via e-mail at [richard.cavens@akanch.ang.af.mil](mailto:richard.cavens@akanch.ang.af.mil).



## You can apply for dental benefits— here's how

By Senior Airman Kimberly Glasco  
Public Affairs

How many times have you avoided chewing on your sensitive side? Do you wonder why you have that headache? That annoying pain in the back of your mouth just might be a cavity. Why not go to the dentist and have that pain checked out?

I know, you figure it will go away. Besides, perhaps you don't have the money to go to the dentist. How many times could you have avoided that root canal, if you would have checked on that cavity a little sooner?

Well, now you can, with the United Concordia Dental Plan. This is a pre-paid, voluntary dental plan. It's being offered to Guard members and their dependants. Monthly coverage is under \$10.00 for single Guardsmen. Family coverage can go up to sixty dollars a month, depending on the number and ages of your children. Children under four years of age are covered for free.

Please keep your dependants' ID cards current. The insurance information is kept active based on the DEERS system.



The sponsor should have one year's retainability. The program enrolls you for one year. If you choose to stay with the program, your plan continues on a month-to-month basis.

You are expected to pay the first month premium in advance. If you pay before the 20th of the month, you can be eligible for the following month.

There are 139 participating dentists in Anchorage, and 20 participating in Fairbanks.

The plan offers two free yearly routine cleanings and exams. Anything beyond routine maintenance is covered up to 80 percent.

You can enroll online, or complete a form and send it to United Concordia. The premium payments can be deducted from your payroll, or mailed in monthly.

Finally, if you are deployed while enrolled, please notify United Concordia. They can then freeze your program. During deployments, active duty Guard members have free dental care. For further questions, contact United Concordia @ [www.ucci.com](http://www.ucci.com) or call 1-866-8499.



## You should Know...

### Volunteers for Wing Dinner

Volunteers are needed for the Annual Kulis Holiday Dinner.

It will be at the new Hangar 4 on December 19th at 1:30 p.m.

The dinner committee is seeking volunteers for:

- ☒ Cooking
- ☒ Cleaning
- ☒ Setup and teardown
- ☒ Decorating

Interested parties should contact Master Sgt. Joedy Wake at ext. 1190.

### Guard and Reserve Pay Calculators Available

National Guard and Reserve members can calculate their drill pay through free calculators available at Military.com.

Servicemembers select their pay grade, minimum Time in Service, and the number of drill periods (one drill period is four hours), and their total drill pay will be calculated.

Typically, one drill weekend includes four drill periods. The National Guard pay calculator can be found at: <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,31089--,00.html>.

## Change of Command

*176 Operations Support Flight  
Change of Command Ceremony*

*Saturday, October 18th, 2003*

*1:00 p.m.*

*Operations Theater*

*Lt. Col. William Willenbrink*

*to take command from*

*Lt. Col. Phillip Means*

## Family Readiness

The 176 CES FRG would like to invite Kulis families to Chaplain Rick Caven's presentation on Long Distance Relationships. More than ever deployments and separation are affecting Guard families.

Please join the Civil Engineer Squadron Family Readiness Group Dec. 7 at 1:30 p.m. in the Ops Theater at Kulis for a lesson in making the best of long distance relationships.



## Duty Calls

### Upcoming UTA dates

Month:	UTA:
October	18 - 19
November	1 - 2
December	6 - 7

## Air Force Climate Survey Kicks off—what do you think?

The 2003 Air Force Climate Survey kicked off 1 Oct, with this year's theme being "Speak Today, Shape Tomorrow." The Air Force Climate Survey is a key method for Air Force members to elevate issues to Air Force leaders through anonymous

and voluntary means. The survey provides a chance to speak out directly and anonymously to Air Force leaders, up to the Chief of Staff.

Survey covers 13 factors that measure work experience: job, resources, core values, leadership, supervision, training and development, teamwork, participation and involvement, recognition, unit flexibility, general satisfaction, unit performance outcomes and job enhancement.

☑ Candid feedback is sought from the Total Force. This year the survey includes Reserve, Guard, non-appropriated fund civilians and students in a temporary-duty status.

☑ Anonymity continues to be key factor: Survey team ensures privacy by using advanced information-masking software.

☑ Participation continues to climb: From 39% in 1997 to more than 65% in 2002.

☑ Climate survey runs through Nov. 23. The survey can be accessed at <https://afclimatesurvey.af.mil> either on a government or personal computer.

Results will be released in early 2004.



Lt. Col. Ronald Parkhouse, a former commander of the 210th Rescue Squadron and most recently assigned to ALCOM at Elmendorf, receives the traditional "hose-down" from his wife, Linda in August, after his "fini flight"—his last flight as a crew member in the HC-130.

**176th Wing**  
**Kulis Air National Guard Base**  
5005 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99502-1998

Prsrt Std  
US Postage  
Paid  
Anchorage, Alaska  
Permit 838